



St John's Catholic Primary School BATH

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2018/21

I am unique,
In the eyes of God.
All seeing, all knowing, all loving,
He embraces our family,
Parish, parent, child,
All one with you.
I am of the world,
With the seeds of excellence within me,
Encouraged to grow and flourish,
To a spiritual fulfilment.
I am unique,
And with you beside me,
All is possible.

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Early Years Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a sound foundation for future learning. It is a period of rapid growth and development, during which children discover a great deal about themselves and the world around them.

Aims and Objectives:

Overall our aim is to nurture naturally curious children by ensuring that learning is based on enjoyment and challenge. Play is the basis upon which we build children's confidence to explore, investigate and make sense of their world. We achieve this by:

- Making learning fun
- Challenging and offering the opportunity to investigate
- Providing access to a variety of play experiences throughout all areas of the curriculum
- Giving children ownership of their activities and learning

- Planning a carefully constructed creative curriculum
- Children actively participating in new learning opportunities
- Children's confidence developing, and encouraging them to express their opinions
- Children becoming flexible and creative in their learning
- Identifying special educational needs early and catering for their specific needs
- Developing a positive disposition towards their learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four principles:

- **A Unique Child** - every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** - children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.
- **Learning and Development** - children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

A Unique Child:

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use positive praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and house points, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. All of the children's achievements are recognised, shared and celebrated to promote confidence and self-esteem.

We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from as well as the wider world.

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disability:

All children are valued in our school. They are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage.

Children's Needs:

Children need a safe and secure environment, in which the contributions of all are valued. A structured daily routine is provided to help them feel secure and happy. The rooms are organised to be safe, enabling them to move, play and have quiet time. We understand that young children need patience, time and support. It is important for the adults working with young children to realise when to intervene and when to leave the children to continue uninterrupted and thereby not spoiling their concentration and flow. We recognise that children develop at different rates and this is reflected in the weekly planning. The Early Years experiences build on what the children already know and can do, extending their knowledge, experience and interest, and developing their self-esteem and confidence. Teachers use a variety of

teaching strategies based on the learning needs of the children and provide a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children to help them to learn effectively. We monitor children's progress and use this as the basis of our planning, to ensure that we provide support where necessary and also provide challenge for those children whose ability and understanding is above age related expectation.

Safeguarding and Welfare:

It is vital that our children are safe in school. We aim to create an environment that is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. We educate the children on the boundaries and rules within school and help them to understand the reasons behind these. The children take an active part in creating a 'class agreement'. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Revised Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

Positive Relationships:

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. All EYFS staff aim to develop strong and supportive relationships with all of the children. The EYFS teachers, with the EYFS TAs, act as 'Key Persons' to all children in EYFS. We also aim to build caring, positive and supportive relationships with the children's families.

Parents as partners:

We recognise that parents and carers are the children's primary educators and value their contributions. They are encouraged to visit the school prior to their child starting and are invited to attend three induction sessions with their child in the summer term before their child begins school. There is also an induction meeting for parents at which they are able to meet their child's class teacher and begin to form their partnership. Parents are given an A to Z booklet outlining lots of useful information at the induction meeting. Every term they are given information outlining the projects being covered and giving them support and guidance to help with their child's learning at home. Parents are encouraged to complete 'wow stickers' as a way of contributing to their child's learning journal. Weekly home-learning challenges are produced, to help the parents in supporting their child's learning at home. There are several parent information sessions throughout the year, in which we provide information about areas of the curriculum. These focus on phonics, reading, writing and maths. We organise several 'Open Classroom' afternoons throughout the year, inviting parents in to join us for a celebration of the children's learning. We also encourage parents to come into school to help with a variety of activities including reading, cooking, and gardening. The school operates an 'Open Door Policy' and parents are always welcome to discuss their child with their class teacher, especially if there are issues that may affect their time in school. We also have a 'Home-School Record' which can be used as written communication between teacher and parents. There are three parent consultation evenings during the year, during which individual children's progress is discussed. Parents also receive an end of year report on their child's attainment and progress.

Enabling Environments:

We aim to create a stimulating learning environment which allows children to feel confident and secure whilst also providing challenge. Both classes share one classroom, which is divided into areas of learning i.e. creative area, role play, reading corner, investigation area, and construction area. The classroom is set out to

enable independent learning in all areas. The children have daily access to all areas of the indoor classroom as well as the outdoor environment. They are encouraged to use the outdoors as an extension of the classroom. We encourage children to become independent and creative learners and our classroom and resources support this. Resources are appropriate for the age of the children and are improved and replaced when funds allow. Children direct their own learning during continuous provision, with staff providing enhanced provision to extend and develop learning. Staff also enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning. There is a balance between child-initiated, adult-initiated and adult-led activities.

Learning and Development:

There are seven main areas of learning and development within EYFS. This includes three 'prime areas,' and four 'specific areas.' Each of these areas are then broken down further, resulting in 17 areas in all.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and Language (Listening and Attention, Understanding, Speaking)
- Physical Development (Moving and Handling, Health and Self-Care)
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Self-Confidence, Managing Feelings and Behaviour, Making Relationships)

The specific areas are:

- Literacy (Reading, Writing)
- Mathematics (Number, Shape Space and Measure)
- Understanding the world (People and Communities, The World, Technology)
- Expressive arts and design (Media and Materials, Being Imaginative)

These seven areas of learning and development provide a framework for effective planning, teaching and assessing the early years curriculum. All areas are important and inter-connected.

Communication and Language:

We provide activities in which the children can communicate in a wide range of situations, where they can listen and respond to adults and each other, and practise and extend their range of vocabulary. Role play is a key feature of this learning.

Physical Development:

Children's fine and gross motor skills are developed through play and structured tasks. We help them develop an understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe. They also learn how to take part in games, gymnastics and dance-based activities, and have opportunities to play on a range of outdoor apparatus. They also have a specific PE session taught once a week by a specialised PE teacher.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

We provide opportunities for children to become valued members of their class and the school, and we help them develop a positive sense of themselves, with confidence in their own abilities. We teach the children how to co-operate and work harmoniously alongside each other, in order to form positive relationships with others and develop respect for all. There are weekly taught sessions, following the SEAL scheme of work as well as activities based on whole-class THRIVE assessments.

Literacy:

We teach children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. We base our phonics teaching on 'Letters and Sounds' and use 'Jolly Phonics' to teach sound and letter recognition, word building and reading skills. Cursive letter formation is taught using the 'Teach Handwriting' scheme. The children have access to a wide range of reading materials and a love for reading is instilled in them. They have weekly visits to the school library, where they share a story with the librarian before choosing a book to take home. We provide the children with school reading books to practise at home from Term 2 and ensure that these are appropriate to their reading ability. We provide a range of writing materials both inside the classroom and in the outdoor environment, to encourage the children's independent writing, as well as planning adult guided sessions to support this.

Mathematics:

The children develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern and shape & space through practical tasks and discussion. Through these experiences, the children learn to count, sort, match, make patterns, make connections and recognise relationships. They also learn to record their ideas at an independent level appropriate to their stage of development.

Understanding the World:

The curriculum provides opportunities for the children to make sense of their physical environment and community. They solve problems, experiment and question in a varied range of contexts and explore and find out about their environment and people and places that have significance in their lives. The children have the opportunity to develop their Computing skills using a range of play-based and focused activities across the curriculum. They have access to a range of technological toys and resources including computers, Beebots, digital cameras and ipads.

Expressive Art and Design:

The children take part in a variety of art, design and technology, movement, dance and imaginative role-play activities to develop their ability to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings. They are given opportunities to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. They also have a specific music session taught once a week.

Religious Education:

This area of the curriculum is specific to us as a Catholic School. We follow the school policy and teach from the 'God Matters' syllabus. We are aware that children of this age are beginning their journey into faith and this may be their first opportunity to hear the good news of the gospel. Prayer and reflection is an important aspect of the school day, with opportunities for children to take an active part being offered to all. Each classroom has a reflection area, where children are encouraged to spend time talking to God.

Characteristics of Learning:

Whilst planning activities and learning opportunities, we also reflect on the different ways in which children learn. The three 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' are:

- Playing and Exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

- Active Learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment:

Assessment is a very important process in determining the needs of the child. The process begins with visits to the Pre-school and nursery settings, meeting the children and discussing each child with the practitioners. We value the input of parents' views and comments in building the profile for each child. The school undertakes baseline assessments of each child in each of the areas of learning. Formative assessment occurs throughout the year. 2BuildaProfile is used to capture the children's learning and achievements in school and parents are encouraged to complete 'wow stickers' to share their child's achievements from home. These are then used to assess each individual child's achievements, interests and learning styles and to shape future learning opportunities. Children's progress and attainment is formally recorded each term, using Target Tracker in order for the progress of each child to be monitored. The children are given individual targets for reading, writing and mathematics, and these are shared with parents so that they are able to support the children with these at home. Any individual concerns regarding progress are discussed with parents and steps are put in place to support the child. In the final term of the year, the Early Years Profile is completed for each child. The children's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals in each of the 17 areas. For each area, we indicate whether the children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). We also provide a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three characteristics of effective learning. This information is discussed with the child's Year 1 teacher, as well as their parents. It is also provided to the Local Authority.

Conclusion:

We endeavour to encourage and sustain young children's interests; to empower them to become motivated learners with a desire to continue learning; to help children take their first educational steps positively and to meet the wider world of education with confidence. We want all children to be happy and enjoy their early experiences in school, and through this develop a positive attitude to school and an enthusiasm for learning, whilst developing a respectful and caring attitude towards others.

Signed: _____

Chair of Governors: _____

Reviewed: 23rd January 2018

Due Review: 23rd January 2021